



Louisiana

Bone Growth Stimulation

Policy # 00011

Original Effective Date: 05/01/1995

Current Effective Date: 11/01/2018

Applies to all products administered or underwritten by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and its subsidiary, HMO Louisiana, Inc. (collectively referred to as the "Company"), unless otherwise provided in the applicable contract. Medical technology is constantly evolving, and we reserve the right to review and update Medical Policy periodically.

When Services May Be Eligible for Coverage

Coverage for eligible medical treatments or procedures, drugs, devices or biological products may be provided only if:

- *Benefits are available in the member's contract/certificate, and*
- *Medical necessity criteria and guidelines are met.*

Based on review of available data, the Company may consider noninvasive electrical bone growth stimulation (EBGS) as treatment of fracture **nonunion** or congenital pseudoarthroses in the appendicular skeleton (the appendicular skeleton includes the bones of the shoulder girdle, upper extremities, pelvis, and lower extremities) to be **eligible for coverage**.

Patient Selection Criteria for the use of Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation (EBGS) of the Appendicular Skeleton

Coverage eligibility for the use of noninvasive EBGS of the appendicular skeleton as a treatment of fracture nonunion will be considered when the following criteria are met:

- At least 3 months have passed since the date of fracture; AND
- Serial radiographs have confirmed that no progressive signs of healing have occurred; AND
- The fracture gap is 1 cm or less; AND
- The patient can be adequately immobilized; AND
- The patient is of an age likely to comply with non-weight bearing for fractures of the pelvis and lower extremities.

Based on review of available data, the Company may consider noninvasive EBGS of the spine to augment primary lumbar or cervical spinal fusion in individuals at high risk for pseudoarthrosis to be **eligible for coverage**.

Patient Selection Criteria for Primary Cervical or Lumbar Fusion

Coverage eligibility for the use of noninvasive EBGS of the spine to augment primary lumbar or cervical spinal fusion in individuals at high risk for pseudoarthrosis will be considered when any of the following criteria are present:

- Diabetes; OR
- Metabolic bone disease (including osteoporosis, osteopenia, and bone disease secondary to renal disease, nutritional deficiency, or conditions in which bone healing is likely to be compromised); OR
- Immunocompromise; OR
- Systemic vascular disease; OR
- History of long term use of corticosteroids; OR

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- Fusion revision (e.g., repeat surgery due to prior unhealed fusion attempt) when at least six (6) months has passed since the original surgery and imaging studies confirm that healing has not progressed in the preceding three (3) months; OR
- Fusion performed at two (2) or more adjacent levels for lumbar fusion; OR
- Fusion performed at three (3) or more adjacent levels for cervical fusion; OR
- Current smokers in whom smoking cessation prior to surgery was not feasible because the surgery is not being performed on an elective basis.

When Services Are Considered Investigational

Coverage is not available for investigational medical treatments or procedures, drugs, devices or biological products.

Based on available data, the Company considers the use of invasive or non-invasive EBGs for other applications in the appendicular skeleton including, but not limited to, the treatment fresh fractures, delayed union, immediate postsurgical treatment after appendicular skeletal surgery, stress fractures, arthrodesis or failed arthrodesis, or when patient selection criteria are not met to be **investigational***

(Note: Delayed union is defined as a decelerating fracture healing process, as identified by serial x-rays.)

Based on review of available data, the Company considers implantable and semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulators for use on the appendicular skeleton to be **investigational.***

Based on review of available data, the Company considers noninvasive EBGs for primary cervical or lumbar fusion and for all spinal levels when patient selection criteria are not met to be **investigational***, including but not limited to the following:

- Treatment of spondylolysis or pars interarticularis defect; OR
- Semi-invasive EBGs for any indication; OR
- As an adjunct for primary bone healing of a spinal fracture; OR
- As a nonsurgical treatment of an established pseudoarthrosis.

Based on available data, the Company considers the use of low-intensity ultrasound treatment to be **investigational*** for all indications, including but not limited to the following:

- Treatment of fresh fractures (surgically managed or nonsurgically managed); OR
- Treatment of fracture nonunion and delayed union fractures; OR
- Treatment of stress fractures, osteotomy, and distraction osteogenesis.

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Policy Guidelines

Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation

Fracture Nonunion

No consensus on the definition of fracture nonunion currently exists. One proposed definition is failure of progression of fracture healing for at least 3 consecutive months (and for at least 6 months following the fracture), accompanied by clinical symptoms of delayed union or nonunion (pain, difficulty bearing weight) (Bhandari et al, 2012).

The original U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) labeling of fracture nonunions defined them as fractures not showing progressive healing after at least 9 months from the original injury. The labeling states: "A nonunion is considered to be established when a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since injury and the fracture site shows no visibly progressive signs of healing for minimum of 3 months." This timeframe is not based on physiologic principles but was included as part of the research design for FDA approval as a means of ensuring homogeneous populations of patients, many of whom were serving as their own controls. Others have contended that 9 months represents an arbitrary cutoff point that does not reflect the complicated variables present in fractures (i.e., degree of soft tissue damage, alignment of the bone fragments, vascularity, quality of the underlying bone stock). Some fractures may show no signs of healing, based on serial radiographs as early as 3 months, while a fracture nonunion may not be diagnosed in others until well after 9 months. The current policy of requiring a 3-month timeframe for lack of progression of healing is consistent with the definition of nonunion as described in the clinical literature.

Delayed Union

Delayed union is defined as a decelerating healing process as determined by serial radiographs, together with a lack of clinical and radiologic evidence of union, bony continuity, or bone reaction at the fracture site for no less than 3 months from the index injury or the most recent intervention. In contrast, nonunion serial radiographs (described above) show no evidence of healing. When lumped together, delayed union and nonunion are sometimes referred to as "ununited fractures."

Fresh Fracture

A fracture is most commonly defined as "fresh" for 7 days after its occurrence. Most fresh closed fractures heal without complications with the use of standard fracture care (i.e., closed reduction, cast immobilization).

Background/Overview

Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Appendicular Skeleton

Delayed Fracture Healing

Most bone fractures heal spontaneously over a few months postinjury. Approximately 5% to 10% of all fractures have delayed healing, resulting in continued morbidity and increased utilization of health care services.

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There is no standard definition of a fracture nonunion. The FDA labeling for one of the electrical stimulators included in this review defined nonunion as follows: "A nonunion is considered to be established when a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since injury and the fracture site shows no visibly progressive signs of healing for a minimum of 3 months." Others have contended that 9 months represents an arbitrary cutoff point that does not reflect the complicated variables present in fractures (i.e., the degree of soft tissue damage, alignment of the bone fragments, vascularity, quality of the underlying bone stock). Other proposed definitions of nonunion involve 3 to 6 months from the original injury, or simply when serial radiographs fail to show any further healing. According to FDA labeling for a low-intensity pulsed ultrasound (LIPUS) device, "a nonunion is considered to be established when the fracture site shows no visibly progressive signs of healing." Factors contributing to a nonunion include: which bone is fractured, fracture site, the degree of bone loss, time since injury, the extent of soft tissue injury, and patient factors (e.g., smoking, diabetes, systemic disease).

Delayed union is generally considered a failure to heal between 3 and 9 months postfracture, after which the fracture site would be considered a nonunion. Delayed union may also be defined as a decelerating bone healing process, as identified in serial radiographs. (In contrast, nonunion serial radiographs show no evidence of healing.) Together, delayed union and nonunion are sometimes referred to as "united fractures." To determine fracture healing status, it is important to include both radiographic and clinical criteria. Clinical criteria include the lack of ability to bear weight, fracture pain, and tenderness on palpation.

Fractures at certain locations (e.g., scaphoid, proximal fifth metatarsal) are at greater risk of delayed union due to a tenuous blood supply. Systemic factors, including immunosuppression, cancer, and tobacco use, may also predispose patients to fracture nonunion, along with certain medications (e.g., nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, fluoroquinolones).

Treatment

Individuals with recognized delayed fracture unions might begin by reducing the risk factors for delayed unions or nonunions but may progress to surgical repair if it persists.

Electrical and Electromagnetic Bone Growth Stimulators

Different applications of electrical and electromagnetic fields have been used to promote healing of delayed and nonunion fractures: invasive, noninvasive, and semi-invasive.

Invasive stimulation involves the surgical implantation of a cathode at the fracture site to produce direct current electrical stimulation. Invasive devices require surgical implantation of a current generator in an intramuscular or subcutaneous space, while an electrode is implanted within the fragments of bone graft at the fusion site. The implantable device typically remains functional for 6 to 9 months after implantation, and, although the current generator is removed in a second surgical procedure when stimulation is completed, the electrode may or may not be removed. Implantable electrodes provide constant stimulation at the nonunion or fracture site but carry increased risks associated with implantable leads.

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Noninvasive electrical bone growth stimulators generate a weak electrical current within the target site using pulsed electromagnetic fields, capacitive coupling, or combined magnetic fields. In capacitive coupling, small skin pads/electrodes are placed on either side of the fusion site and worn for 24 hours a day until healing occurs or up to 9 months. In contrast, pulsed electromagnetic fields are delivered via treatment coils placed over the skin and worn for 6 to 8 hours a day for 3 to 6 months. Combined magnetic fields deliver a time-varying magnetic field by superimposing the time-varying magnetic field onto an additional static magnetic field. This device involves a 30-minute treatment per day for 9 months. Patient compliance may be an issue with externally worn devices.

Semi-invasive (semi-implantable) stimulators use percutaneous electrodes and an external power supply, obviating the need for a surgical procedure to remove the generator when treatment is finished.

Noninvasive Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Spine

Bone growth stimulators, also known as osteogenesis stimulators, are utilized to promote bone healing in spinal fusion through delivery of electrical current to the fusion site. Noninvasive devices are worn externally, beginning at any time from the date of surgery until up to six (6) months after surgery.

Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device

Bone Fractures

An estimated 7.9 million fractures occur annually in the United States. Most bone fractures heal spontaneously over several months following standard fracture care (closed reduction if necessary, followed by immobilization with casting or splinting). However, approximately 5% to 10% of all fractures have delayed healing, resulting in continued morbidity and increased utilization of health care services. Factors contributing to a nonunion include which bone is fractured, fracture site, the degree of bone loss, time since injury, the extent of soft tissue injury, and patient factors (e.g., smoking, diabetes, systemic disease).

Fracture Nonunion

There is no standard definition of a fracture nonunion. The FDA has defined nonunion as when "a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since injury, and the fracture site shows no visibly progressive signs of healing for a minimum of 3 months." Other definitions cite 3 to 6 months of time from the original injury, or simply when serial radiographs fail to show any further healing. These definitions do not reflect the underlying conditions in fractures that affect healing, such as the degree of soft tissue damage, alignment of the bone fragments, vascularity, and quality of the underlying bone stock.

Delayed Union

Delayed union is generally considered a failure to heal between 3 and 9 months post fracture, after which the fracture site would be considered a nonunion. The delayed union may also be defined as a decelerating bone healing process, as identified in serial radiographs. (In contrast, nonunion serial radiographs show no evidence of healing.) It is important to include both radiographic and clinical criteria to determine fracture

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healing status. Clinical criteria include the lack of ability to bear weight, fracture pain, and tenderness on palpation.

Treatment

LIPUS has been proposed to accelerate healing of fractures. LIPUS is believed to alter the molecular and cellular mechanisms involved in each stage of the healing process (inflammation, soft callus formation, hard callus formation, and bone remodeling). The mechanism of action at the cellular level is not precisely known, but it is theorized that LIPUS may stimulate the production or the activities of the following compounds that contribute to the bone healing process: cyclooxygenase-2, collagenase, integrin proteins, calcium, chondroblasts, mesenchymal cells, fibroblasts, and osteoblasts.

LIPUS treatment is self-administered, once daily for 20 minutes, until the fracture has healed, usually for 5 months.

FDA or Other Governmental Regulatory Approval **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**

Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Appendicular Skeleton

In 1984, the noninvasive OrthoPak^{®†} Bone Growth Stimulator (BioElectron, now Zimmer Biomet) was approved by FDA through the premarket approval process for treatment of fracture nonunion. Pulsed electromagnetic field systems with FDA premarket approval (all noninvasive devices) include Physio-Stim^{®†} (Orthofix), first approved in 1986, and OrthoLogic^{®†} 1000, approved in 1997, both indicated for treatment of established nonunion secondary to trauma, excluding vertebrae and all flat bones, in which the width of the nonunion defect is less than one-half the width of the bone to be treated; and the EBI Bone Healing System^{®†} (Electrobiology, now Zimmer Biomet), which was first approved in 1979 and indicated for nonunions, failed fusions, and congenital pseudoarthroses. No distinction was made between long and short bones. FDA has approved labeling changes for electrical bone growth stimulators that remove any timeframe for the diagnosis.

No semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulator devices with FDA approval or clearance were identified.

FDA product code LOF.

Electrical Stimulation of the Spine as an Adjunct to Spinal Fusion Procedures

The following implantable device was approved by the U.S. FDA through the premarket approval process:

- In 1986, the OsteoStim^{®†} (Electro-Biology), which may also be marketed under the trade name SPF (Biomet).

The following noninvasive bone growth stimulators have been approved by FDA through the premarket approval process:

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- In 1999, the SpinalPak^{®±} bone growth stimulator system (Bioelectron, a subsidiary of Electro-Biology), a capacitive coupling system, was approved for use as an adjunct to primary lumbar spinal fusion at 1 or 2 levels.
- In 1979, the EBI Bone Healing System (Bioelectron, a subsidiary of Electro-Biology), a pulsed electromagnetic field system, was approved for nonunions, failed fusions, and congenital pseudoarthroses. The device is secured with a belt around the waist.
- In 1994, the SpinaLogic Bone Growth Stimulator^{®±} (Regentek, a division of dj Orthopedics [formerly OrthoLogic]) was approved as a combined magnetic field portable device. This device is secured with a belt around the waist.
- In 1996, the Spinal-Stim Lite^{®±} (Orthofix) was approved as a spinal adjunct to the Physio-Stim. The Spinal-Stim Lite device was approved to increase the probability of fusion success and as a nonoperative treatment for the salvage of failed spinal fusion, where a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since the last surgery.
- In 2004, the Stim^{®±} (Orthofix), a pulsed electromagnetic field system, was approved as an adjunct to cervical fusion surgery in patients at high risk for nonfusion.

No semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulator devices were identified with FDA approval or clearance.

FDA product codes: LOE (invasive bone growth stimulator), LOF (noninvasive bone growth stimulator).

Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device

In 1994, the Sonic Accelerated Fracture Healing System (SAFHS^{®±}; renamed Exogen 2000^{®±} and since 2006, Exogen 4000+; Bioventus) was approved by the U.S. FDA through the premarket approval process for treatment of fresh, closed, posteriorly displaced distal radius (Colles) fractures and fresh, closed, or grade I open tibial diaphysis fractures in skeletally mature individuals when these fractures are orthopedically managed by closed reduction and cast immobilization. In February 2000, the labeled indication was expanded to include the treatment of established nonunions, excluding skull and vertebra.

FDA product code: LPQ.

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)

Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Appendicular Skeleton

Noninvasive stimulators are covered by Medicare for the following indications:

- “Nonunion of long bone fractures;
- Failed fusion, where a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since the last surgery;
- Congenital pseudoarthroses....”

Invasive stimulators are covered for:

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- “Nonunion of long bone fractures.”

“Effective April 1, 2000, nonunion of long bone fractures is considered to exist only when serial radiographs have confirmed that fracture healing has ceased for 3 or more months prior to starting treatment with the electrical osteogenic stimulator. Serial radiographs must include a minimum of 2 sets of radiographs, each including multiple views of the fracture site, separated by a minimum of 90 days.”

Electrical Stimulation of the Spine as an Adjunct to Spinal Fusion Procedures

Medicare covers noninvasive electrical stimulators for the following:

- “Failed fusion, where a minimum of 9 months has elapsed since the last surgery” and
- “...as an adjunct to spinal fusion surgery for patients at high risk of pseudoarthrosis due to previously failed spinal fusion at the same site or for those undergoing multiple level fusion. A multiple level fusion involves 3 or more vertebrae (e.g., L3-L5, L4-S1, etc).”

Medicare covers invasive electrical stimulators:

- “...as an adjunct to spinal fusion surgery for patients at high risk of pseudoarthrosis due to previously failed spinal fusion at the same site or for those undergoing multiple level fusion. A multiple level fusion involves 3 or more vertebrae (e.g., L3-L5, L4-S1, etc).”

Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device

Effective 2001, ultrasonic osteogenic stimulators were covered as medically reasonable and necessary for the treatment of nonunion fractures. Nonunion fractures of the skull, vertebrae, and those that are tumor-related are excluded from coverage. Ultrasonic osteogenic stimulators may not be used concurrently with other noninvasive osteogenic devices. Ultrasonic osteogenic stimulators for fresh fractures and delayed unions are not covered.

Rationale/Source

This medical policy was developed through consideration of peer-reviewed medical literature generally recognized by the relevant medical community, U.S. FDA approval status, nationally accepted standards of medical practice and accepted standards of medical practice in this community, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association technology assessment program (TEC) and other non-affiliated technology evaluation centers, reference to federal regulations, other plan medical policies, and accredited national guidelines.

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation

Noninvasive Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Appendicular Skeleton

For individuals who have fracture nonunion who receive noninvasive EBGs, the evidence includes randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and systematic reviews of RCTs. Relevant outcomes are symptoms,

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change in disease status, and functional outcomes. The U.S. FDA has approved noninvasive EBGs for fracture nonunions and congenital pseudoarthroses in the appendicular skeleton, based largely on studies with patients serving as their controls. There is also evidence from 2 small sham-controlled randomized trials that noninvasive electrical stimulators improve fracture healing for patients with fracture nonunion. There are few nonsurgical options in this population, and the pre-post studies of patients with nonhealing fractures support the efficacy of the treatment. The evidence is sufficient to determine that the technology results in a meaningful improvement in the net health outcome.

For individuals who have delayed fracture union, fresh or stress fracture(s), or who have had surgery of the appendicular skeleton who receive noninvasive EBGs, the evidence includes RCTs and systematic reviews of RCTs. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, change in disease status, and functional outcomes. A meta-analysis of 5 RCTs found no statistically significant benefit of EBGs for fresh fractures. RCTs on the delayed union of the other types of fractures were limited by small sample sizes and did not show significant differences in outcomes between study groups. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

Invasive Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation

For individuals who have fracture, pseudoarthroses, or who have had surgery of the appendicular skeleton who receive implantable and semi-invasive EBGs, the evidence includes a small number of case series. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, change in disease status, and functional outcomes. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device

For individuals who have fresh fractures (surgically or nonsurgically managed) who receive LIPUS as an adjunct to routine care, the evidence includes RCTs and several meta-analyses. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, morbid events, functional outcomes, and quality of life. The evidence base has recently evolved with the publication of a large RCT and meta-analysis significantly shifting the weight of the evidence. Conclusions based on several earlier and small RCTs, rated at high risk of bias, showed a potential benefit of LIPUS; however, the large RCT published in 2016, rated at low risk of bias, showed no benefit. A 2017 meta-analysis including only trials with low risk of bias found no difference in days to full weight bearing, pain reduction, or days to radiographic healing. Similarly, the overall results of the meta-analysis found no significant difference in return to work, subsequent operations, or adverse events. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

For individuals who have fracture nonunion or delayed union fracture who receive LIPUS as an adjunct to routine care including surgery, if appropriate, the evidence includes only lower quality studies consisting of a small systematic review in scaphoid nonunions, a meta-analysis of nonunion in various locations, 3 low-quality RCTs, and observational studies. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, morbid events, functional outcomes, and quality of life. Reported outcomes in this subgroup of fractures do not include functional outcomes. A wide range of healing rates has been reported across the observational studies with a lack of comparison with routine surgical care, limiting any meaningful interpretation of these results. Additionally, the evidence base on the use of LIPUS in the management of fresh fractures has evolved as described

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above, and there is no demonstrated physiologic mechanism suggesting differential results of LIPUS in fracture nonunion or delayed union. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

For individuals who have stress fractures, osteotomy sites, or distraction osteogenesis who receive LIPUS as an adjunct to routine care, the evidence includes only lower quality studies consisting of small RCTs. Relevant outcomes are symptoms, morbid events, functional outcomes, and quality of life. Results do not generally include functional outcomes and results across various outcomes, primarily time to radiographic healing, are inconsistent. Additionally, the evidence base on the use of LIPUS in the management of fresh fractures has evolved as described above and there is no demonstrated physiologic mechanism suggesting differential results of LIPUS in stress fractures, osteotomy sites, or distraction osteogenesis. The evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of the technology on health outcomes.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND POSITION STATEMENTS

Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device

British Medical Journal (BMJ) Rapid Recommendation

The *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) Rapid Recommendations are a series of articles, produced by BMJ in collaboration with the MAGIC group, to provide clinicians with practice guidelines. In 2017, BMJ Rapid Recommendations published guidelines on the use of LIPUS for bone healing. The guidelines were based on a 2017 systematic review, which included 26 RCTs evaluating patients with fresh fractures not surgically managed, fresh fractures surgically managed, nonunion fractures, osteotomy, and distraction osteogenesis. The committee concluded that there is “moderate to high certainty evidence to support a strong recommendation against the use of LIPUS for bone healing.” Furthermore, the guideline expert panel discussed whether the results of higher quality studies in patients with fresh fractures reported in Schandelmaier et al (2017) would apply to other types of fractures including nonunions and osteotomies. “After extensive deliberations, the panel found no compelling anatomical or physiological reasons why LIPUS would probably be beneficial in these other patient populations.”

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) published guidance (2010) on LIPUS to promote fracture healing. NICE concluded that this procedure “can reduce fracture healing” and is particularly beneficial for “delayed healing and fracture non-union.”

NICE published guidance (2013) on Exogen for the treatment of long-bone fractures with nonunion and delayed fracture healing. NICE concluded that use of the Exogen bone healing system to treat long-bone fractures with nonunion is supported by “clinical evidence” and “cost savings ... through avoiding surgery.” For long-bone fractures with delayed healing, defined as no radiologic evidence of healing after 3 months, there was “some radiologic evidence of improved healing.” However, due to “substantial uncertainties about the rate at which bone healing progresses without adjunctive treatment between 3 and 9 months after

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fracture” and need for surgery, “cost consequences” were uncertain. The next review of this guidance is in 2018.

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (2009) published guidelines on the treatment of distal radius fractures. The Academy issued a limited recommendation for the use of LIPUS for adjuvant treatment of distal radius fractures. While evidence from 1 study demonstrated an increased rate of healing (measured by the absence of pain and radiographic union), the additional cost of LIPUS resulted in a “limited” recommendation.

References

1. AIM Specialty Health, AIM Musculoskeletal Program Guidelines for Spine Surgery, “Noninvasive Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation”, July 1, 2018. Last Reviewed December 12, 2017.
2. Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Medical Policy Reference Manual, “Electrical Bone Growth Stimulation of the Appendicular Skeleton”, 7.01.07, 4:2018.
3. Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Medical Policy Reference Manual, “Ultrasound Accelerated Fracture Healing Device”, 1.01.05, 3:2018.
4. Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Medical Policy Reference Manual, “Electrical Stimulation of the Spine as an Adjunct to Spinal Fusion Procedures”, 7.01.85, 4:2018.

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10/18/2001	Medical Policy Committee review. Policy revised to include ultrasound accelerated healing devices and noninvasive and invasive bone growth stimulators.
11/12/2001	Managed Care Advisory Council approval
06/24/2002	Format revision. No substance change to policy.
11/18/2003	Medical Policy Committee review. Format revision. Policy name changed from Fracture Healing Devices to Bone Growth Stimulation.
01/26/2004	Managed Care Advisory Council approval
03/01/2005	Medical Director review
03/15/2005	Medical Policy Committee review
04/04/2005	Managed Care Advisory Council approval
04/05/2006	Medical Director review
04/19/2006	Medical Policy Committee review. Format revision, including addition of FDA and or other governmental regulatory approval
04/04/2007	Medical Director review
04/18/2007	Medical Policy Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged. Rationale/Source updated
04/02/2008	Medical Director review
04/16/2008	Medical Policy Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged. Removed criterion from patient selection criteria “the fracture gap is 1cm or less.” Rationale/Source updated.
04/02/2009	Medical Director review
04/15/2009	Medical Policy Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged.
04/08/2010	Medical Policy Committee approval
04/21/2010	Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Added noninvasive electrical bone stimulation as a treatment of patients with failed lumbar spinal fusion to be eligible for coverage. Added

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implantable and semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulators to be investigational. Added semi-invasive electrical stimulation as an adjunct to lumbar fusion surgery and for failed lumbar fusion to be investigational. Added invasive, semi-invasive and noninvasive electrical stimulation as an adjunct to cervical fusion surgery and for failed cervical spine fusion to be investigational. Updated rationale and references.

04/07/2011 Medical Policy Committee review

04/13/2011 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged.

10/06/2011 Medical Policy Committee review

10/19/2011 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. "Based on review of available data, the Company may consider low-intensity ultrasound treatment may be considered as a treatment of delayed union of bones excluding the skull and vertebra to be eligible for coverage" was added to the coverage statement. Used to be investigational. "Based on available data, the Company considers implantable and semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulators to be investigational" was removed from policy.

06/28/2012 Medical Policy Committee review

07/27/2012 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Criteria for low –intensity ultrasound for fresh fractures revised.

02/20/2013 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Changed criteria statement for electrical bone growth stimulation of the spine from "potential" spinal fusion surgery to "lumbar" spinal fusion surgery for clarification. Deleted the second criteria bullet for the use of electrical bone growth stimulation of the spine as a treatment for patients with failed spinal fusion, since this is a duplicate coverage statement in the policy.

06/06/2013 Medical Policy Committee review

06/25/2013 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Replaced "lumbar" with "spinal" in the first bullet of the criteria for electrical bone growth stimulation of the spine, so that all spinal fusions are covered with criteria. Deleted "lumbar" from the non-invasive electrical bone growth stimulation coverage statement for failed spinal fusions. Deleted the investigational statement regarding cervical fusions.

09/05/2013 Medical Policy Committee review

09/18/2013 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. "Based on review of available data, the Company considers implantable and semi-invasive electrical bone growth stimulators for use on the appendicular skeleton to be investigational" was added to the coverage statement.

09/04/2014 Medical Policy Committee review

09/17/2014 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged.

08/03/2015 Coding update: ICD10 Diagnosis code section added; ICD9 Procedure code section removed.

09/03/2015 Medical Policy Committee review

09/23/2015 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged.

03/03/2016 Medical Policy Committee review

03/16/2016 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Reorganized and clarified coverage section.

10/01/2016 Coding update

01/01/2017 Coding update: Removing ICD-9 Diagnosis Codes

03/02/2017 Medical Policy Committee review

03/15/2017 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Immediate postsurgical treatment after appendicular skeletal surgery, stress fractures, and fresh surgically treated closed fractures added to existing INV statements. Clarified language in coverage statements. Reduced size of rationale section and added guidelines section.

08/03/2017 Medical Policy Committee review

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Louisiana

Bone Growth Stimulation

Policy # 00011

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- 08/23/2017 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Added criteria bullet for electrical bone growth stimulation of the appendicular skeleton, "The fracture gap is 1 cm or less" and changed the verbiage of the last criteria bullet to, "The patient is of an age likely to comply with non-weight bearing for fractures of the pelvis and lower extremities to track BCBSA. Policy coverage changed to include AIM guidelines for primary cervical or lumbar fusion. Changed coverage for the use of low intensity ultrasound from eligible for coverage with criteria to investigational.
- 08/09/2018 Medical Policy Committee review
- 08/15/2018 Medical Policy Implementation Committee approval. Coverage eligibility unchanged.
- Next Scheduled Review Date: 08/2019

Coding

The five character codes included in the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana Medical Policy Coverage Guidelines are obtained from Current Procedural Terminology (CPT)[®]†, copyright 2017 by the American Medical Association (AMA). CPT is developed by the AMA as a listing of descriptive terms and five character identifying codes and modifiers for reporting medical services and procedures performed by physician.

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Codes used to identify services associated with this policy may include (but may not be limited to) the following:

Code Type	Code
CPT	20974, 20979
HCPCS	E0747, E0748, E0760
ICD-10 Diagnosis	M45.50XA-M45.58XA M80.00XA-M80.00XP M80.011K-M80.019P M80.021A-M80.08XP
	M80.80XA-M80.88XP M81.0 M81.6 M81.8
	M84.30XK-M84.339P M84.341K-M84.346P M84.350K-M84.359P M84.361K-M84.369P
	M84.371K-M84.379P M84.38XK-M84.38XP M84.40XA-M84.48XP M84.50XA-M84.58XP
	M84.60XA-M84.68XP M84.750G-M84.750S M84.751G-M84.751S M84.752G-M84.752S
	M84.753G-M84.752S M84.753G-M84.753S M84.754G-M84.754S M84.755G-M84.755S
	M84.756G-M84.756S M84.757G-M84.757S M84.758G-M84.758S M84.759G-M84.759S
	S02.0XXK S02.11K-S02.19XK S02.2XXK-S02.92XK S12.000K-S12.691K
	S22.000K-S22.9XXK S32.000K-S32.9XXK S42.001A-S42.92XP S49.001A-S49.199P

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S52.001A-S52.92XR	S59.001A-S59.299P	S62.001K-S62.92XP	S72.001K-S72.92XR
S79.001K-S79.199P	S82.001K-S82.92XR	S89.001K-S89.399P	S92.001K-S92.919P
S92.811G-S92.811S	S92.812G-S92.812S	S92.819G-S92.819S	S99.001G-S99.001S
S99.002G-S99.002S	S99.009G-S99.009S	S99.011G-S99.011S	S99.012G-S99.012S
S99.019G-S99.019S	S99.021G-S99.021S	S99.022G-S99.022S	S99.029G-S99.029S
S99.031G-S99.031S	S99.032G-S99.032S	S99.039G-S99.039S	S99.041G-S99.041S
S99.042G-S99.042S	S99.049G-S99.049S	S99.091G-S99.091S	S99.092G-S99.092S
S99.099G-S99.099S	S99.101G-S99.101S	S99.102G-S99.102S	S99.109G-S99.109S
S99.111G-S99.111S	S99.112G-S99.112S	S99.119G-S99.119S	S99.121G-S99.121S
S99.122G-S99.122S	S99.129G-S99.129S	S99.131G-S99.131S	S99.132G-S99.132S
S99.139G-S99.139S	S99.141G-S99.141S	S99.142G-S99.142S	S99.149G-S99.149S
S99.191G-S99.191S	S99.192G-S99.192S	S99.199G-S99.199S	S99.201G-S99.201S
S99.202G-S99.202S	S99.209G-S99.209S	S99.211G-S99.211S	S99.212G-S99.212S
S99.219G-S99.219S	S99.221G-S99.221S	S99.222G-S99.222P	S99.229G-S99.229S
S99.231G-S99.231S	S99.232G-S99.232S	S99.239G-S99.239S	S99.241G-S99.241S
S99.242G-S99.242S	S99.249G-S99.249S	S99.291G-S99.291S	S99.292G-S99.292S
S99.299G-S99.299S			

*Investigational – A medical treatment, procedure, drug, device, or biological product is Investigational if the effectiveness has not been clearly tested and it has not been incorporated into standard medical practice. Any determination we make that a medical treatment, procedure, drug, device, or biological product is Investigational will be based on a consideration of the following:

- A. Whether the medical treatment, procedure, drug, device, or biological product can be lawfully marketed without approval of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and whether such approval has been granted at the time the medical treatment, procedure, drug, device, or biological product is sought to be furnished; or
- B. Whether the medical treatment, procedure, drug, device, or biological product requires further studies or clinical trials to determine its maximum tolerated dose, toxicity, safety, effectiveness, or effectiveness as compared with the standard means of treatment or diagnosis, must improve health outcomes, according to the consensus of opinion among experts as shown by reliable evidence, including:
 - 1. Consultation with the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association technology assessment program (TEC) or other nonaffiliated technology evaluation center(s);
 - 2. Credible scientific evidence published in peer-reviewed medical literature generally recognized by the relevant medical community; or
 - 3. Reference to federal regulations.

**Medically Necessary (or "Medical Necessity") - Health care services, treatment, procedures, equipment, drugs, devices, items or supplies that a Provider, exercising prudent clinical judgment, would provide to a patient for the purpose of preventing, evaluating, diagnosing or treating an illness, injury, disease or its symptoms, and that are:

- A. In accordance with nationally accepted standards of medical practice;
- B. Clinically appropriate, in terms of type, frequency, extent, level of care, site and duration, and considered effective for the patient's illness, injury or disease; and
- C. Not primarily for the personal comfort or convenience of the patient, physician or other health care provider, and not more costly than an alternative service or sequence of services at least as likely to produce equivalent therapeutic or diagnostic results as to the diagnosis or treatment of that patient's illness, injury or disease.

For these purposes, "nationally accepted standards of medical practice" means standards that are based on credible scientific evidence published in peer-reviewed medical literature generally recognized by the relevant medical community, Physician Specialty Society recommendations and the views of Physicians practicing in relevant clinical areas and any other relevant factors.

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